ASSESSMENT & REPORTING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (ARMS)
Application – P. L. 107-110

Guidance

Who can apply?

The purpose of the Assessment and Reporting Management System (ARMS) grants is to assist districts to develop comprehensive data management systems for assessment and reporting requirements of STARS portfolios and the new Nebraska Student Staff Record System (NSSRS). There are a limited amount of funds available for the ARMS grants and districts may wish to consider also using other NCLB funds, such as REAP grants and Titles II-D and Title V funds, in developing their data management systems.

- K-12 Districts, or
- Consortium of districts: this option is available only for K-12 systems as they would exist if LB 126 were to be implemented. A Class IV or a K-12 district must be the fiscal agent, or
- Consortium of districts within one ESU with the ESU as the fiscal agent, or
- Consortium of districts across multiple ESUs only if there is a written agreement that all ESUs involved will provide support to the project.

Districts that elect to join a consortium are not allowed to assign a portion of this allocation to a consortium while maintaining a portion of it for district use.

A cover page and completed Profile (Sections A through D) are required for each district, even if the district is a member of a consortium.

Allocations

For the 2005-06 school year, each district shall receive an allocation of $7.00 per student based on the Fall Membership report for the 2005-06 school year. A list of districts, membership and allocations can be found on the Department's homepage at www.nde.ne.us. Pending the availability of federal funds, there will be an additional allocation for the 2006-07 school year but the amount per student may be less.

Reserving An Allocation

If a district needs more time to identify their needs and plan their comprehensive data management system, they may reserve their 2005-06 allocation for use in the 2006-07 school year. The option to reserve funds is on the cover page of the ARMS application. The 2006-07 application will be due on July 1, 2006. Districts electing to reserve their funds must still complete the cover page and

The Profile (Sections A through D) and submit it by March 1, 2006. (See instructions below for completing The Profile.)

Carryover
Districts/consortia that apply for funds now for the 2005-06 school year will be allowed to carryover any funds not spent by September 30, 2006 and amend the carryover funds into the 2006-07 school year application.

Due Date for the ARMS Application
The ARMS application for the 2005-06 school year is due on March 1, 2006. Applications may be submitted before the due date and will be approved as soon as possible after submission. Districts/consortia may only obligate or spend the funds after receiving approval of their application.

ARMS applications may be submitted as a WORD file or on paper and must be received by 5:00 p.m. on March 1. **If no application or cover page indicating the option to reserve funds is received by the Department by March 1, 2006, the Department assumes that the district is not intending to apply and will reclaim the allocation.**

Allowable Uses of ARMS allocations
The ARMS allocations are NCLB funds. This means they can only be used to supplement and not supplant or replace local efforts. In other words, if the district already has a product in place for a function identified in the Profile, these funds cannot be used for that purpose. These funds are intended to fill in the "gaps" in a comprehensive system of data management.

Upgrading software is allowable provided that it expands the capabilities and meets additional functions of the data management system. Upgrading existing hardware is allowable provided the new equipment is necessary for the data management system. Computers cannot be purchased for regular classroom or staff use.

Since the STARS system allows each district to develop their own assessment system, it is anticipated that no one vendor or product is able to meet all the identified functions. Different vendors or products will be needed for the various functions. Comprehensive data management systems should be able to integrate and interpret data from each of the four components identified in Sections A through D. We encourage districts/consortia to consider purchasing software that has Schools Interoperability Framework (SIF) Certification as recommended by the National Educational Technology Plan. Integrated, interoperable, data systems are the key to better allocation of resources and greater management efficiency. The true purpose of data management is for

informing decisions, and the interoperability of the data from one component to another is critical.

NCLB funds cannot be used to create any software product that can be sold. These funds can be used by staff to create connections between software or to develop programs that will only be used locally.

Purchased services are allowed. Part 3 of the application identifies the information that must be provided. A district may purchase services (i.e., training) from an ESU.

Administrative Costs
Indirect costs are allowed. Indirect cost rates are provided by the Department and are available on the NDE homepage at:
http://ess.nde.state.ne.us/IndirectCost/

There is a 5% limit on administrative costs. This includes both the indirect costs and direct administrative costs. See the Department's State and Federal Grant Management Requirements and Guidance found at:
http://www.nde.state.ne.us/federalprograms/pdf/StateFedGrantMangement2004.pdf

Instructions
Cover Page (page 1 of 9)
A cover page, signed by the authorized representative of the district, must be submitted by every district wishing to use these funds, even if the district elects to assign their allocation to a consortium.

The cover page must be submitted on paper. Parts 1 through 5 of the application may be submitted on paper or as a WORD file attachment. Send electronic files to Sherri.muehling@nde.ne.gov. Send all paper forms, including cover pages, to the Sherri Muehling, Nebraska Department of Education, 301 Centennial Mall South, Lincoln, NE 68509-4987

Part 1 – The Profile (pages 2 through 7)
The Profile (Sections A through D) must be completed and submitted by every district. Consortia should submit all of the original signed cover pages and profiles of their member districts. Profiles may be submitted in a WORD file.

Districts electing to reserve their funds for 2006-07 need only indicate which functions are already in place and the software or program. Priority needs do not need to be identified by districts reserving their funds.

Part 2 – Budget (page 8 of 9)

Indicate the proposed expenditures for administration and each section A through D. See allowable uses in the guidance above. Budget in whole dollars.

Before submitting the application, please check:
    a) The total amount of the budget equals the total available allocated funds (no more and no less). In a consortia, this is the total available for all member districts.
    b) The sum of each row in provided in the **Total Activity** column.
    c) The sum of each Object Code column is provided in the **Total Object Code** row.

Part 3, 4 and 5 (page 9 of 9)
Instructions are provided on the form.

Before submitting the application, please check:
    a) The total amount of funds budgeted for purchased services in Object Code 300 is fully described and itemized in the response to Part 3.
    b) The total amount of funds budgeted for software under Object Code 400 is itemized and included in the response to Part 3.
    c) The total amount of funds budgeted for equipment under Object Code 500 is itemized and included in the response to Part 3.
    d) The total amount of funds budgeted for professional development in Object Code 600 is included in the response to Part 4.
    e) The total amount of funds budgeted in Object Code 100 for staff salaries (includes stipends) is included in the response to Part 5.

Important Links

These documents are also available from the NDE home page:
www.nde.state.ne.us

ASSESSMENT
District Assessment Portfolio Cover Pages:
> http://www.nde.state.ne.us/stars/documents/PortfolioCover05.pdf

District Assessment Sample Portfolio
> Reading:
http://www.nde.state.ne.us/stars/documents/Samplereadingportfolio.pdf
> Mathematics:
http://www.nde.state.ne.us/stars/documents/Samplemathportfolio.pdf

Assessment & Portfolio Instructions & Suggestions:
> http://www.nde.state.ne.us/stars/documents/PortfolioInstr.Sugg05.pdf

Portfolio Technical Manual
> http://www.nde.state.ne.us/stars/documents/TechnicalManual.05.pdf

Six Criteria DVD:
> TBA

DIRECTORY
Nebraska Dept. of Education Directory of Schools:
> http://ess.nde.state.ne.us/DataCenter/EducationDirectory/Default.htm

STUDENT RECORD SYSTEM
Vendor Information: http://www.nde.state.ne.us/nssrs/

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